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Defence R&D Canada
Centre for Operational Research and Analysis

Strategic Analysis Section

NATO Transformation and Operational Support in the Canadian Forces

Part 1: The Political Dimension

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Abstract

This Technical Report examines the political dimension of NATO transformation and how it may affect how the Alliance and the Canadian Forces approach the challenge of deploying and sustaining forces in the field. It constitutes one part of a two-part project on the politico-military transformation of the Alliance and operational support. The first part of the report defines key terms and explores the strategic environment in which NATO finds itself. The second part evaluates the status of the transformational process through the lens of recent strategic guidance, enlargement, outreach to individual and institutional partners, and current economic realities. Preliminary conclusions reveal that strategic developments have awakened policy-makers to the importance of operational support to current and anticipated missions, and that innovations in capability development may be realized in the face fiscal austerity.

Résumé

Le présent rapport technique examine la dimension politique de la transformation de l'OTAN ainsi que son incidence sur la façon dont l'Alliance et les Forces canadiennes procèdent au déploiement et au maintien en puissance des forces sur le terrain. Il fait partie d'un projet en deux volets portant sur la transformation politico-militaire du soutien à l'Alliance et du soutien opérationnel. La première partie du rapport définit les termes principaux et décrit l'environnement stratégique dans lequel se situe l'OTAN. La deuxième partie évalue l'état du processus de transformation à la lumière de la récente orientation stratégique, de l'expansion de l'OTAN, des contacts avec des partenaires (personnes et institutions) et des réalités économiques actuelles. Les conclusions préliminaires indiquent que des développements stratégiques ont sensibilisé les décideurs à l'importance du soutien opérationnel aux missions actuelles et à venir, et que des innovations en matière de développement des capacités pourraient être réalisées dans des conditions d'austérité budgétaire.

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Executive summary

NATO Transformation and Operational Support in the Canadian Forces: Part 1: The Political Dimension

Background: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been remarkably successful in its original mandate. Having marshalled the political will and the military resources needed to safeguard liberal democracy in the Euro-Atlantic area, it emerged from the Cold War into a brighter but uncertain security environment in the 1990s. The allies responded to the evolution of the political landscape by cutting their defence expenditures while preserving NATO's essential collective defence mission. Instead of winding up the organization they opened the door to former adversaries who pledged to transform themselves and their armed forces to fit the Western liberal-democratic model. This proved to be prescient, as the requirement for high-quality, deployable military forces did not entirely disappear with the end of the Cold War.

At the same time, military thinkers, sensing a "Revolution in Military Affairs," were busily conceiving of new and creative ways to apply hard power to bend adversaries to their will. In time their theories of how armed forces should be structured and employed were bundled under the heading "transformation." However, these structural changes did not take place in a void. They were informed and driven by an on-going process of change in the international system—in effect, a political transformation—that saw the Alliance being called into action as a new generation of security threats arose on the peripheries of the North Atlantic community in the 1990s, culminating in the deployment of forces to Afghanistan following the attacks of 9/11. As the new decade progressed and terms such as "uncertainty" and "complexity" entered the lexicon, strategic political direction was handed down by the members at each summit meeting, effectively fine-tuning NATO's outlook and priorities. In short, the Alliance's strategic environment and its ambitions were undergoing transformation. This political (rather than military) phenomenon is at the heart of this study.

Long wedded to the territorial defence paradigm, the allies have realized that their extra-territorial ambitions have real, practical consequences. Among these is the need to sustain forces far from their home bases. Operational support has always been a key factor in the success or failure of military operations. The challenge of projecting and sustaining forces at potentially great distances for given periods of time cannot be overlooked when strategists translate political directives into military plans. The transformation of the political and strategic landscape has heightened awareness of the operational support imperative—particularly as allied governments have elevated the utility of the Alliance as a collective security (as opposed to merely a collective defence) actor. Despite the fears of some members that NATO has taken on responsibilities for which it is not configured nor easily adapted, and despite clear asymmetries in commitment from the allies, the organization has embraced the challenge posed by non-Article 5 threats and has shown itself to be a willing to partner with others to achieve common goals.

Canadian Operational Support Command—Chief of Operational Support Transformation (CANOSCOM-COST) has recognized these political trends. It has ordered this study so as to

inform higher-level command on how operational support efforts are evolving internationally, and how this might impact national efforts.

Results: An analysis of the high-level political guidance dispensed by allied governments at the various NATO summits reveals that the Alliance has taken account of the transformation of the international security landscape. "Complexity" is the new buzz-word—a short-hand for situations in which nations employ a mixture of "hard" and "soft" power to help solve problems that resist resolution by arms alone. The strategic guidance, both official and unofficial, has driven home the realization that appropriate logistics is one of the elements without which an operation will fail. Development of this capability has been pursued through enlargement, the forging of external partnerships, and through innovative financial arrangements.

Significance: The Canadian Forces will be affected by these developments. Canada has pooled financial resources with allies to pay for operational support capabilities and has undertaken recent acquisitions for its own purposes which will add to the Alliance's overall capability. But uncertainties remain. How best to align operational support requirements with the expectations of the Euro-Atlantic community will be answered more clearly with the promulgation of a new Strategic Concept in late 2010. In addition, the current economic downturn may stymie some of the transformational initiatives upon which the allies have embarked. Still, there is little doubt that operational support transformation is now at the heart of NATO's own transformation. It seems equally likely that the Canadian Forces will make strenuous efforts to further both those ends.

Future plans: The nature of contemporary military operations has had significant implications for the structure of the Alliance's military forces and their doctrine. This will be examined in a part 2 of this report.

Sommaire

NATO Transformation and Operational Support in the Canadian Forces: Part 1: The Political Dimension

David Rudd; DRDC CORA TR 2010-244; R & D pour la défense Canada –CARO; Novembre 2010.

Contexte: L'Organisation du Traité de l'Atlantique Nord (OTAN) a très bien réussi son mandat initial. Après avoir mobilisé la volonté politique et les ressources militaires nécessaires pour sauvegarder la démocratie libérale dans la zone euro-atlantique, elle est sortie de la période de la guerre froide pour entrer dans un contexte de sécurité plus serein, mais incertain, dans les années 1990. Les pays alliés se sont adaptés à l'évolution du paysage politique en réduisant leurs dépenses de défense tout en préservant la mission de défense collective essentielle de l'OTAN. Au lieu de mettre fin à l'Organisation, ils en ont ouvert les portes aux anciens adversaires qui ont accepté de changer et de transformer leurs forces armées pour qu'elles soient conformes au modèle européen de démocratie libérale. Cela s'est avéré prémonitoire, car le besoin de forces militaires hautement qualifiées et prêtes au déploiement n'a pas complètement disparu avec la fin de la guerre froide.

En même temps, des penseurs militaires, pressentant une « révolution des affaires militaires », s'efforçaient de concevoir de nouveaux moyens d'utiliser la puissance coercitive pour soumettre les adversaires à leur volonté. Au fil du temps, leurs théories sur la façon dont les forces armées devraient être structurées et utilisées ont été regroupées sous le titre de « transformation ». Cependant, ces changements structurels n'ont pas été réalisés dans le vide. Ils reposent sur un processus continu de changement dans le système international – il s'agit en réalité d'une transformation politique – suite auquel l'Alliance a été appelée à intervenir dans de nouvelles sortes de menaces à la sécurité qui ont surgi dans le voisinage des pays de l'Atlantique Nord dans les années 1990, dont le point culminant a été le déploiement en Afghanistan après les attentats du 11 septembre. Au fil de la nouvelle décennie et avec l'utilisation de plus en plus grande des termes « incertitude » et « complexité » dans le domaine de la sécurité, les pays membres de l'OTAN ont donné une orientation politique stratégique lors des diverses réunions au sommet, peaufinant ainsi la vision et les priorités de l'Organisation. En bref, l'environnement stratégique et les ambitions de l'Alliance subissaient une transformation. Ce phénomène (plus politique que militaire) constitue l'élément central de la présente étude.

Longtemps concentrés sur le paradigme de la défense territoriale, les pays alliés se sont rendu compte que les ambitions extraterritoriales ont des conséquences pratiques concrètes, notamment le besoin de maintenir des forces loin de leurs bases d'attache. Le soutien opérationnel a toujours été un facteur clé du succès ou de l'échec des opérations militaires. Lorsque les stratèges traduisent des directives en plans militaires concrets, ils ne peuvent pas ignorer la nécessité de la projection et du maintien de forces à des distances potentiellement grandes pendant une période de temps donnée. La transformation du paysage politique et stratégique a augmenté la conscientisation concernant la nécessité du soutien opérationnel – particulièrement du fait que les pays alliés ont renforcé l'utilité de l'Alliance en tant qu'acteur de la sécurité collective (par opposition à une simple défense collective). Malgré les craintes de certains pays membres découlant du fait que l'OTAN a assumé des responsabilités auxquelles elle n'était pas préparée et

auxquelles elle ne pouvait pas facilement s'adapter, et malgré les asymétries évidentes dans l'engagement des pays alliés, l'Organisation a relevé le défi posé par les menaces autres que celles indiquées à l'article 5 et s'est montrée prête à collaborer à l'atteinte des objectifs communs.

Le Chef – Transformation du soutien opérationnel (CTSO)/Commandement du soutien opérationnel du Canada (COMSOCAN) a reconnu ces tendances politiques. Il a ordonné la réalisation de la présente étude afin que le haut commandement soit informé de l'évolution des activités de soutien opérationnel à l'échelle internationale ainsi que de son incidence sur les activités nationales.

Résultats: Une analyse de l'orientation politique générale donnée par les pays alliés lors des différents sommets de l'OTAN révèlent que l'Alliance a tenu compte de la transformation du paysage international en matière de sécurité. Le terme « complexité » est le nouveau mot à la mode – une autre façon de désigner des situations dans lesquelles les pays alliés utilisent un mélange de pouvoir coercitif ou un pouvoir plus discret pour résoudre des problèmes qui résistent aux seules solutions militaires. L'orientation stratégique, à la fois officielle et non officielle, a fait comprendre que le soutien logistique approprié est l'un des éléments sans lesquels une opération échoue. Le développement de cette capacité s'est poursuivi au moyen de l'élargissement de l'Organisation, de l'établissement de partenariats externes et de la conclusion d'ententes financières novatrices.

Importance: Ces évolutions auront une incidence sur les Forces canadiennes. Le Canada a mis en commun des ressources financières avec les pays alliés afin de financer des capacités de soutien opérationnel et a récemment commencé à acquérir des capacités propres qui viendront s'ajouter aux capacités globales de l'Alliance. Mais une incertitude demeure. La meilleure façon d'harmoniser les besoins de soutien opérationnel avec les attentes de la communauté euro-Atlantique sera déterminée plus clairement par la mise en œuvre d'un nouveau concept stratégique à la fin de 2010. De plus, le ralentissement économique actuel pourrait nuire aux initiatives de transformation entreprises par les pays alliés. Néanmoins, il n'y a maintenant aucun doute que la transformation du soutien opérationnel constitue l'élément central de la transformation de l'OTAN. Il est également fort probable que les Forces canadiennes feront d'énormes efforts en vue de la poursuite de ces deux buts.

Perspectives: La nature des opérations militaires contemporaines a des incidences importantes pour la structure des forces militaires de l'Alliance et sa doctrine. Celles-ci feront l'objet de la 2e partie du présent rapport.

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1   Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has undergone a political and military metamorphosis. No longer a club of North American and West European democracies entrusted with the defence of the inter-German border, the Alliance has taken in former adversaries in Central and Eastern Europe and ventured "out of area," contributing to the stabilization of the Balkans during the 1990s. The emergence of Russia and other successor states from the wreckage of the Soviet Union heralded a period of optimism that the "end of history" was at hand, and that the Euro-Atlantic area would henceforth be free from large-scale conflict. Accordingly, pressure to reduce defence expenditures were widespread in the 1990s, leading many allied governments to cut existing capabilities and/or to delay identifying new ones that might prove relevant to the evolving strategic landscape.

Although there was, during this time, seldom any serious discussion of disbanding the Alliance, member states nevertheless began to see the need to formally (re-)affirm its *raison d'être* following the end of the East-West stand-off. As a new, threat-ambiguous environment replaced the one characterized by super-power confrontation, the need for a revised approach to Euro-Atlantic security became all too clear.

The enlargement of the zone of stability provided by NATO was one part of the solution. Membership in the Alliance was offered to former East bloc states in return for clear and irrevocable commitments to democratization. Freely-elected governments, civilian control of armed forces, and market-based economies flourished in Central and Eastern Europe, creating a new frontier of peace and stability that, sadly, contrasted with the ferocity of the various Balkan crises.

The super-terror attacks of 9/11 and their immediate aftermath increased the urgency with which the evolutionary process unfolded. NATO members woke up to a new strain of international terrorism—one that sought to change more than local politics, but rather the broader strategic environment. The protection of NATO territory from so-called "asymmetric" threats became a going concern, prompting enhancements to the domestic arms of the security apparatus. At the same time the perceived need to stabilize areas outside the Euro-Atlantic zone prompted military planners to conclude that expeditionary operations might have to be mounted in order to prevent threats from migrating home. Driven by enduring humanitarian impulses, overseas operations at the lower end of the conflict spectrum were also cited as possible roles for NATO forces.

Accompanying this was a general consensus among member states that power would be projected beyond the peripheries of the Alliance in concert with non-military actors. Inevitably this has sparked interest among NATO members in ways of improving their ability to transport and sustain forces at great distances from the homeland.

The purpose of this project is to assess the status of the political transformation of NATO with a view to determining how developments at the strategic level might affect the Canadian Forces' (CF) operational support efforts. It is being undertaken to inform Canadian Operational Support Command (CANOSCOM) on a broad range of issues relating to operational support; to provide

support for current and future capability development efforts; to identify areas where progress (strategic, conceptual) has been made, and; to explore where uncertainties/obstacles/risks remain.

This project comprises two parts which explore various facets of transformation and their possible impact on operational support. The first part tackles the purely political dimension of transformation, surveying key issues and policy guidance. The second part explores transformation in its (admittedly more familiar) military, institutional, and doctrinal guise. The first is being done in anticipation of a new Strategic Concept which will be tabled in late 2010. Its value lies in the fact that Canadian military planners, pre-occupied as they are with ongoing operations, must keep abreast of higher-level issues and debates that may affect their work. In the same vein, political decision-makers must be mindful that grand strategy must be translatable into credible military blueprints through an understanding of the military-strategic landscape.

An examination of the political dimension of NATO transformation is expected to cast a wide net, gathering up general rather than detailed implications for operational support. It is expected that part two of this project will, by virtue of its military/operational/conceptual focus, highlight transformation's operational support impact for Canada to a greater degree. Any forthcoming policy, command structure, or force structure review will bring the CF's transformative efforts into even sharper focus.

The methodology for this report's first part is as follows: a definition of key terms; a brief word on the strategic context in which NATO finds itself, and; four sections comprising a non-exhaustive list of political issue areas which may fundamentally change—or transform—the Alliance. The latter includes an analysis of the strategic guidance since the Prague summit in 2002; the process of enlargement; relations with external partners (both national and institutional), and; economic/budgetary issues. In each of the four sections an attempt is made to identify the operational support implications for NATO as a whole and, where possible, the CF. It should be noted that all conclusions are preliminary, and may need to be revisited after the promulgation of the new Strategic Concept.

2 Operational Support and Transformation

In Canadian military parlance, operational support refers to a series of services rendered by units of the CF in order to allow deployed forces to carry out assigned missions at home or abroad. Although the term "logistics" is often used as shorthand for operational support, the endeavour is in fact much more complex. The website of CANOSCOM lists a total of six services that may be required to support operations: logistics, military engineering, land equipment maintenance, communications and information systems, health services, and military police.[1] For the purposes of this report, which is to examine developments at the strategic level, a simplified view of operational support will be employed—one that is largely interchangeable with "logistics," or the controlled movement of forces, their equipment and supplies to distant theatres, and their sustainment over a given period of time.[2] This reductionist approach is not to devalue the role played by the other "enablers." Rather, it is to recognize that when policy-makers contemplate the evolution of the Atlantic Alliance and what is required to conduct a successful operation, they are unlikely to be concerned with matters that rightly belong at the tactical military level. They will issue orders and expect their militaries to translate them into action. Of course, on some occasions political decision-makers will acquire an awareness of operational support imperatives and mention them by name. As will be demonstrated later, operational support/logistics in the form of strategic transport is one of the capabilities that higher-level planners consistently cite as key to NATO's future success.

As noted above, transformation is perhaps most recognizable as a process where significant advances in technology, concepts and doctrine are said to bring about profound changes in the conduct of military operations. But according to Allen Sens, this process takes place within "wider political, economic, and organizational developments that combine to create a paradigm shift in the conduct of warfare."[3] Thus the political dimension of transformation should be seen as the precursor to military transformation in that it gives birth to and continually shapes the military dimension. Transformation should be regarded (and will be in this examination) as a political phenomenon—the preserve of high-level policy-makers rather than just military leaders and theorists.

The importance of bearing in mind the primacy of the political is illustrated in the fact that the political and military components of transformation do not always march in lock step. Transformation should ideally be top-down, informed by grand strategy (a political exercise, to be sure) rather than just military strategy. In a multinational (i.e., NATO) context, strategy should preferably not be formulated in one allied capital, but agreed upon by all allies. It should be

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[1] The inclusion of *land* equipment maintenance is noteworthy, suggesting planners envision conducting operational support in a terrestrial environment. Clearly, not every CF mission will involved the land forces; both the navy an air force may be the lead services, and each possesses organic support capabilities such as afloat logistics and aerial re-fuelling which fall under the category of logistics.

[2] http://www.canoscom-comsocan.forces.gc.ca/sf-fs/index-eng.asp, accessed on 10 June 2009. Also, see Matt Bassford et al, *Strengths and Weaknesses of the Netherlands Armed Forces* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2010), p. 41. The authors point out that the sustainment of forces on operations are dependent on logistics, a credible rotation schedule, enablers, and, notably political will.

[3] Allen Sens, "NATO Transformation and Peace Operations," in Eyal Ben Ari , et al., *The Transformation of the World of War and Peace Operations* (Westport, CT: Praeger International Security, 2009), p. 82.

rational and purposeful, leading predictably to, if not a designated end-state, then to an irreversible momentum toward strategic, operational, and, finally, tactical relevance. Recent experience has shown, however, that transformation does not always result in outcomes that players anticipate or desire. NATO is built on consensus, but in recent years a clash of viewpoints and clear asymmetries in effort indicate a shift from a cohesive collective with shared perceptions and interests to a more diffuse collective with differing security perceptions, interests, and levels of effort. Indeed, the uneven pace at which member states' armed forces have evolved in response to the contemporary security environment reflects variations in their commitment to alliance-wide capability development.

For the purposes of this study, transformation will refer to strategic developments inside and outside of NATO which, taken together, characterize a fundamental change in how the Atlantic Alliance operates. These changes include, inter alia, new trends in foreign and international security policy, the evolution of international system, and the nature of armed conflict, and the interplay between security policy and economics.

3   NATO's World

The political changes inherent in the international system, especially since the end of the Cold War, have altered the face of NATO. The fall of the Berlin Wall is perhaps the most strategically significant event of the past seven decades, not least because it set off a transformative process that remains unfinished. It enabled the enlargement of the Alliance from 16 to 19 and ultimately 28 nations, with many aspirants beginning their transition to full membership in the Partnership for Peace (PfP)―an arrangement whereby prospective members would have their progress toward democracy monitored. It also heralded a new beginning with post-Soviet Russia―one initially characterized by a spirit of co-operation, but which has since given way to disappointment and mistrust.[4] These developments, coupled with the widely-held belief that the unifying threat―a large-scale conventional war in Europe―is no longer a realistic possibility has put the Alliance in an unusual predicament. Having judged itself a success in preventing a general European war, it is grappling with internal and external challenges that, at best, defy easy solutions and, at worst, cast doubt on its ability to retain the cohesiveness and clarity of purpose required to meet a new generation of diverse and non-traditional security threats.

Internally, NATO remains a consensus-based organization, with strategic decisions requiring the agreement of all members. Its collective political weight is most pronounced when it speaks with one voice. But as with any member-driven organization, consensus may become progressively more elusive as membership expands and a wider range of viewpoints demand reconciliation. All members are sovereign in their decision-making, but consensus on where current and future threats originate and how they should be addressed can no longer be taken for granted. This has manifested itself in debate on NATO's present and future purpose, what individual members expect from membership, and the circumstances under which would-be members should be admitted to the club.

Externally, NATO is an organization dedicated to collective defence of its members against threats emanating from outside its borders. However, the depth of its transformation from an entity devoted to deterring and, if necessary, fighting a general European war stands in stark contrast to the fact that the most important operations it has mounted since the 1990s have taken place outside its territory. Unlike the notional NATO-Warsaw Pact engagement, these were operations short of war, for the purposes of stabilization and political reconstruction, and were not considered to represent existential threats to the members. Thus they did not fall squarely within Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. The UN-approved, NATO-led peace support operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina during the 1990s, the Kosovo air campaign in 1999 and the post-conflict stabilization operation there were undertaken to extinguish fires on the doorstep of Western Europe. The effects of these conflicts were localized (largely confined to refugee flows) and their capacity to destabilize the rest of Europe was limited. Nevertheless, public concern for the fate of the civilian populations, coupled with the realization by Western policy-makers that they had much to lose if they failed to deal effectively with crises in their immediate neighbourhood, compelled NATO to assume primary (though not exclusive) responsibility for security in the region.

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[4] See Jonathan Eyal, "Europe and Russia: A Return to the Past," *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 153, No. 5, October 2008.

The Kosovo air campaign was perhaps a watershed in the process of transformation. Politically, it appeared to solidify a move from a collective defence to a collective security organization—a process begun in the mid-1990s where, as a belligerent non-party to the Bosnian conflict, it deployed air power not to safeguard allied territory but to help redress gains made by a perceived aggressor against vulnerable non-NATO populations. Likewise, in Kosovo, it did not engage for reasons of self-defence, but rather in a spirit of quasi-humanitarianism when it could have made the strategic decision to cordon off the crisis area and leave the combatants to settle matters among themselves. In both cases NATO deployed ground units in a stabilization capacity rather than for (re-)taking and holding territory, which for decades had been its primary purpose.

This early bout of transformation took place within a rapidly-changing security environment. The Kosovo conflict was more than a strict conventional fight where the weight of military power was the decisive factor. The war was fought in real-time, the battleground extending to the living rooms of international public opinion. Discord prevailed among the allies as to how vigorously to conduct the air campaign and whether a ground offensive would ultimately be necessary to push Serb forces out of the province. America, by far the largest contributor to Operation ALLIED FORCE, favoured a minimalist strategy. [5] But Washington was also immensely frustrated by the reluctance of some allies to keep up the pressure on Belgrade—particularly after several well-publicized targeting errors. It also laid bare the inadequacies of many allied militaries whose capacity for mounting and sustaining operations was hamstrung by under-investment in key capabilities such as intelligence, aerial refuelling and precision-guided ordnance. But as the conflict took place adjacent to allied territory, with short supply lines, its implications for operational support transformation were not fully appreciated.

The Balkan crises also saw allied ground, air and naval forces operating with those of non-NATO countries, demonstrating the importance of outreach to external partners in the pursuit of common goals. The importance of such partnerships was also evident in the roles played by the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU), both of whom brought vital civilian expertise to bear. The task of forging new states out of the ashes of the old Yugoslavia and shepherding them toward some semblance of stability was something that a military alliance was incapable of doing on its own. Years later, the partnering of military and a broad range of civilian actors to stabilize and re-build fragile/failed states would be formalized as the Comprehensive Approach.

This lesson has been re-learned by the allies in Afghanistan, NATO's most important and complex undertaking. Although initially a US-inspired conventional fight against the al Qaeda-affiliated Taliban government, Washington subsequently realized that the Afghan state would have to be reconstructed to prevent the re-emergence of anti-American and anti-Western political forces. No longer would the technical superiority and conventional doctrine which characterized the first two wars against Iraq or the overthrow of the Taliban suffice to achieve lasting stability. Classic battles between uniformed armies has given way to what General Rupert Smith has called "war among the people", whereby forces are concurrently engaged in counter-insurgency, stability, and reconstruction operations, as well as information operations in the field and at

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[5] Sten Rynning, *NATO Renewed* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 76-77. Rynning recounts how the Clinton administration had to be cajoled into bringing military force to bear, and how the Pentagon believed that "Kosovo was irrelevant to its essential mission of fighting two 'major regional conflicts'."

home.[6] Thus with the transformation of the conflict paradigm, hopes for a quick, comprehensive, and relatively bloodless victory followed by a swift exit have been replaced by a lengthy commitment of military and civilian resources, projected far from allied territory, with heretofore uncertain results.

3.1   Competing Visions of Transformation

As the Alliance enters is seventh decade it is beset by internal debates between members which reflect conflicting visions of its present and future. Areas of contention include threat perceptions, the balance to be struck between territorial defence and expeditionary/out-of-area operations, and how far to enlarge. Another issue is whether the mutual security guarantee in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty should apply only to the Euro-Atlantic area as it did before September 11, 2001, and whether the definition of an "armed attack" should also be understood as one carried out by non-state parties. Some have argued that the demonstrated ability of new, asymmetric threats to reach home soil from the far corners of the world means that a reactive, geographical defence has been overtaken by the need to mount a more proactive, functional defence to address a wider variety of threats.[7]

The current state of NATO's political transformation has been examined by Noetzel and Schreer, who conclude that a multi-tier alliance has replaced the one characterized by Cold War-era consensus. Groupings of states now cluster around key issues in certain ways, reflecting their strategic outlooks and policy priorities, as well as their willingness to ante up resources to fulfil them. According to this school of thought, NATO is divided into three tiers comprising "reformist," "status quo," and "reversal" camps. The reformers envision a global NATO—one willing to mount operations far from allied territory, address a broader set of security challenges (i.e., nuclear terrorism, energy security), and embrace new members. Members of this group include the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. Perhaps not coincidentally, these states have borne the brunt of combat in Afghanistan.

The status quo camp is decidedly less enthusiastic about expeditionary operations, envisioning a stronger European pillar, less deference to US grand strategy, with no rush to expand membership into the former Soviet space lest it offend Moscow. It comprises long-time members Germany, France, Belgium, and Italy. Their viewpoints find some favour with the reversal camp, made up of Central European states who do not wish to see an over-emphasis on out-of-area operations. But in contrast with the status quo members, the reversalists harbour a less benign view of Russia, considering her a potential threat rather than a partner. Accordingly, they call for a return to territorial defence planning.

The two scholars declare that, despite official protestations to the contrary, trans-Atlantic discord has become so acute that:

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[6] General Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Knopf, 2007), pp. 269-374.

[7] David Yost, "NATO's evolving purposes and the next Strategic Concept," *International Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 12, 2010, p. 490. Yost speaks of a trend toward the "deterritorialization" of the alliance's collective defence mission and the gradual adoption of an "anticipatory" approach to collective defence, possibly encompassing missile defence, cyber defence, countering terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, and crisis management.

> [C]ollective defence and the principle of solidarity are no longer at the forefront of many allies' considerations. Instead, NATO is being transformed into a multilateral security forum in which coalitions of like-minded allies find it increasingly hard to agree on, let alone execute, strategy.[8]

This rather neat division of opinion is of course an abstraction; Noetzel and Schreer freely admit that domestic or international developments can influence an ally's stance on any of the main issues.[9] And there is at least a rhetorical consensus on the need for allied militaries to evolve so that their capabilities are in tune with the threats of the 21st century. The ability of member-states to commit to, and be held accountable for, a structured program of capability development indicates a desire to find common ground. Still, the existence of a multi-tiered alliance suggests a lack of clear consensus at the strategic level on how or under what circumstances the "new look" militaries should be used.

Clearly, a NATO transformed from one characterized by a high level of cohesion into one characterized by "tiers" has at least theoretical implications for operational support. A globalist stance will conceivably require greater efforts at power projection than would be the case with a purely territorial outlook. But regardless of in which camp one resides, NATO has already been pulled decisively out of area. It is expanding its strategic reach not only through the operations in Africa, the Indian Ocean and South Asia,[10] but in the establishment of ad hoc partnerships with countries who are contributing human and material resources and/or infrastructure to support those operations. Such ambitions may not meet with the approval of long-standing members, but it is hard to escape the conclusion that if members fail to reconcile differing views on when and where to deploy, and how much or how little to devote to the missions that they themselves prioritize, "NATO will lose relevance for them and they will take measures to build or sustain autonomous capabilities"[11] including, one assumes, those relating to operational support.

If true, the multi-tier narrative illustrates what few political leaders care to admit: that as it enters its seventh decade the Alliance is experiencing a degree of fragmentation. Allies are not of one mind and it is unclear how the gap will be bridged. In some ways Afghanistan represents a *virtual* consensus in that the allies have responded to an Article 5 threat, but understand the mission in vey different ways—some (mostly European) as a stability and reconstruction effort, others as a counter-insurgency campaign. Not surprisingly, the size and nature of their contributions to the mission vary considerably.[12] Should the mission end in failure or be perceived to have done so, this may vindicate the status quo and reversal camps who feel that the Alliance should restrain its ambitions. NATO will then have to grapple with a strong body of opinion pressing for a return to

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[8] Timo Noetzel and Benjamin Schreer, "Does a multi-tier NATO matter? The Atlantic alliance and the process of strategic change," *International Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 2, 2009, p. 215.
[9] Poland and Russia, previously at loggerheads over proposed American ballistic missile defence plans and Moscow's 2008 war with Georgia, have recently enjoyed a noticeable improvement in relations—particularly in the wake of the crash of the Polish president's aircraft during a state visit to commemorate the Katyn Forrest Massacre.
[10] Examples include, respectively, logistical support to the EU mission in Sudan; the deployment of naval forces to counter piracy in the Gulf of Aden an off the Horn of Africa (Operation OCEAN SHIELD); the October 2005 relief mission to Pakistan following a major earthquake.
[11] Noetzel and Schreer, "Does a multi-tier NATO matter?" p. 221.
[12] Jolyon Howorth, "NATO's core purpose," in *Re-launching NATO or just re-branding it?* Security and Defence Forum Discussion Paper, 2009, p. 18.

a geographical rather than functional defence entity. This is unlikely to endear the Alliance to a United States which, despite the lukewarm attitude of the Obama administration toward future large-scale military operations, looks to the Alliance as a tool through which it pursues a globalized security strategy.[13] At the 2010 Munich Conference on Security Policy, Defense Secretary Robert Gates warned against the emergence of a "two-tiered" NATO―one based on those willing to employ military force and those who were not―saying that such an outcome "would effectively destroy the alliance."[14] Should America not find willing partners in Europe, or should it re-focus its attention on the Pacific Rim, it may re-align its considerable military capabilities and re-distribute them in a way that the serves ad hoc coalitions of the willing and able that it will lead.[15] With the world's most advanced military logistics system, the implications for allies who depend on American assistance may be considerable.

Whatever turmoil lies just below the surface, there are undeniably strong bonds that may counteract the centrifugal forces that might otherwise cause members to contemplate the regionalization or, worse, re-nationalization of security policy. Wallace Thies observed that fragmentation has not led to disintegration because NATO is an alliance of values as well as interests, and that values endure regardless of the presence or source of an external threat. Liberal democracies are also expected to co-operate and maintain viable partnerships with like-minded states even if the danger which originally gave birth to the partnership has passed. Disputes over burden-sharing or how best to resolve a particular crisis may occasionally be public but are seldom pushed to the breaking point, and in any case are resolved rather quickly because the parties wish them to be.[16] The Alliance also gives members unprecedented access to the defence plans and assets of their neighbours―something unthinkable for centuries before the signing of the Washington Treaty.

Noetzel and Schreer see "variable geometry" as a way of repairing the cracks in NATO's foundation. Having acknowledged that the multi-tiered system has become increasingly difficult to manage, constellations of members should be permitted to form around an initiative and take action without the benefit of a full consensus.[17] A vision of how this looser political arrangement could apply to capability development was put forth by General (Retd) Raymond Hennault, former Chairman of NATO's Military Committee, who opined that "non-consensual transformation" should not be considered a harbinger of fragmentation. On the contrary, if it results in the growth of overall capability in an era of fiscal restraint, it should be cautiously welcomed.[18] Whether these recommendations will be adopted in the new Strategic Concept is

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[13] National Security Strategy May 2010, p. 41. http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf, accessed on 28 May 2010. Evidence of the reformist/globalist view of the Alliance is contained in the statement: "We are committed to ensuring that NATO is able to address the *full* range of 21st century challenges […]" [emphasis added].

[14] Andrew Gray, "Gates says two-tiered NATO puts alliance at risk," http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL1027452420080210, accessed on 10 February 2010.

[15] S. Frühling and B. Schreer, "NATO's new Strategic Concept and US commitments in the Asia-Pacific," *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 154, No. 5., October 2009, pp. 98-102. Quoted in Yost, p. 515.

[16] Wallace J. Thies, *Why NATO Endures* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. x-xi.

[17] Noetzel and Schreer, "Does a multi-tier NATO matter?" p. 224. This notional mechanism is analogous to the "permanent structured co-operation" provided for in the European Union's Lisbon Treaty, allowing self-selecting groups of states to move ahead with security initiatives without the participation of all members.

[18] Interview with the author, 22 April 2010.

unclear at the time of writing. However, a survey of recent strategic guidance should provide some indication of how the Alliance has attempted to push ahead on a transformative course. From this one may perceive the value the allies place in building robust and responsive logistical capabilities.

4 Transformation and Operational Support: The Political Drivers

4.1 Strategic Guidance

It has been over a decade since NATO updated its Strategic Concept; the version unveiled in Washington in April 1999 is, in the absence of more recent official direction, still authoritative. But as it pre-dates the attacks of 9/11, the dispatch of forces to Afghanistan, the divergence of opinion on strategic goals beyond the (territorial) defence of member-states, one should look elsewhere for high-level direction which might prove more immediately relevant to operational support.

The various declarations since 1999 which followed each NATO summit have typically re-affirmed the commitment to mutual defence while addressing issues relating to on-going operations, efforts to combat proliferation, NATO-Russia relations, the latest round of enlargement, etc. But some have sought to adjust plans and priorities, broadening the agenda beyond remarks on the external security environment and the internal Alliance environment to tackle practical issues.

The most distant summit—Prague 2002—provides some of the clearest guidance on transformation by taking concrete steps to usher in new members and capabilities. It invited former Soviet republics of the Baltic region as well as countries from Eastern Europe to join the Alliance. It launched a major expeditionary initiative in the form of the NATO Response Force (NRF)—a 25,000-strong multinational, tri-service entity originally meant for operations up to and including combat. This was accompanied by a pledge to reform the Alliance's command arrangements. Most notable among these was the establishment of Allied Command Transformation (ACT) and the inauguration of the Prague Capabilities Commitment (PCC) which obligated members to invest in specific capabilities for which NATO anticipated increasing need.[19] The salience of these initiatives will be more fully examined in the second half of this project.

What practical effect did this political guidance have on operational support? The alteration of NATO's map to include new contributors and its commitment to expeditionary operations (through the NRF) spurred 10 member states (including Canada) to form a sealift consortium comprising up to 10 roll-on/roll-off vessels on a full-time charter or assured access basis.[20] Managed by the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA), this project has been a relative success story, not least because of over-capacity in the global shipping market and the resultant willingness of shipping lines to contract with the military. Shortly after Prague, the expanded membership pledged to fill the gap in strategic airlift so as to further fulfil their expeditionary ambitions. The resulting Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS) would eventually see a contract for up to six Antonov-124 cargo aircraft and 2,000 hours of flying time

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[19] These included intelligence, surveillance, aerial refuelling, strategic sealift and airlift, and deployable combat/combat service support.

[20] Among the signatories was Hungary, one of three new members of the Alliance (along with Poland the Czech Republic).

annually for 14 NATO countries and, significantly, two non-NATO partners.[21] From 2006 until 2010, Canada was an enthusiastic member of the consortium.

The Comprehensive Political Guidance (CPG), tabled at the Riga summit in November 2006, was intended to give additional political direction to the process of transformation, establishing priorities for a 10-15 year period without the need to undertake a wholesale review of policy. It noted that threats could originate from outside the Euro-Atlantic zone and that they could be asymmetric in nature. It called on members to maintain the ability to undertake a greater range of small missions, and pointedly stated that the Alliance must be able to

> …conduct and support multinational joint expeditionary operations far from home territory with little or no host nation support and…sustain them for extended periods. This requires forces that are fully deployable, sustainable and interoperable and the means to deploy them. It also requires a fully co-ordinated and, where appropriate, multinational approach to logistics support. [22]

The 2008 Bucharest summit was also notable in that it validated the importance of the Comprehensive Approach to current and future security challenges. This has two potential implications for operational support. First, in stating that the capacities of various government departments and international actors would be required to address complex security problems, NATO in effect (re-)committed itself to acting outside of the Euro-Atlantic area, as there was little need (beyond the Balkans) to implement such a strategy within it collective borders. Secondly, by acknowledging its own incapacity to deal effectively with non-traditional security threats, it opened the door to lending support to civilian government actors whose activities would likewise need to be sustained at great distances from their home base. Thus by embracing the transformative process the Alliance was increasing the scope for operational support to play an even more critical role in Afghanistan and elsewhere. To that end, the members declared:

> We will further develop the capabilities required to conduct the full range of our missions and to remedy specific shortfalls. We will work particularly at improving strategic lift and intra-theatre airlift…and welcome national initiatives in support of this work, as well as addressing multinational logistics.[23]

The April 2009 summit in Strasbourg/Kehl took place on the 60th anniversary of NATO's founding and yielded the Declaration on Alliance Security. It stated that

> NATO's door will remain open to all European democracies which share the values of our Alliance, which are willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of membership, and whose inclusion can contribute to common security and stability.[24]

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[21] http://www.casr.ca/bg-airlift-nato.htm, accessed on 10 October 2009. According to Canadian-American Strategic Review, the contract included a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) covering the treatment of troops from participating nations operating or transiting through the territory of the contractors―in this case, Russia and Ukraine.

[22] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Comprehensive Political Guidance, http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b061129e.htm, accessed on 5 May 2009.

[23] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Bucharest Summit Declaration, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm?selectedLocale=en, accessed on 10 July 2009.

[24] North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Declaration on Alliance Security, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_52838.htm?mode=pressrelease, accessed on 5 February 2010.

This statement is significant in light of Russia's brief war with Georgia in 2008. Prior to that conflict there were disagreements within the Alliance as to whether to admit former Soviet republics to the club in the face of Moscow's vehement opposition. (The reformist tier, led by the Bush administration, was generally in favour of enlargement into the former Soviet space while status quo members France and Germany were decidedly against.) In the same vein there were doubts as to whether states lying outside the Euro-Atlantic mainland should even be considered for membership. The latter issue was not resolved at the summit. However, NATO membership is typically granted only if the aspirant nation has, in addition to the conditions listed above, resolved all outstanding border issues with its neighbours. As the conflict did not settle the territorial dispute between Georgia and the break-away enclaves of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the fact that Georgian membership was not ruled out either explicitly or by the imposition of geographical limits on the Euro-Atlantic area suggests that, from a geographical and therefore political standpoint, the transformation of the Alliance shows no signs of stopping. Should Article 5 need to be extended further eastward to fit NATO's evolving map, the operational support challenge for existing members can only grow.

All told, there is a remarkable degree of continuity in the strategic guidance. An inclusive approach to membership and an expeditionary mind-set have characterized the past decade, even if the allies now show signs of restricting their ambitions on both fronts. At the same time, fealty to the Article 5 mutual defence clause remains a necessary bedrock on which to build the alliance of the future; it should not be seen as evidence of a lack of strategic imagination let alone non-transformation given that major threats may originate from further afield and may increasingly take an unconventional form. The cumulative effect of the strategic guidance is to keep the allies grounded in the present and future, focussing their attention on the ever-evolving security environment and eliciting concrete commitments from them.

This continuity is also reflected in a recent study which may be considered "unofficial" strategic guidance. *NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement* is the work of a panel of experts drawn from 12 member-states, commissioned by Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to lay the groundwork for the new Strategic Concept. It calls for a "blend of reaffirmation and renovation aimed at creating the optimum mix of old and new." While reaffirming NATO's core purpose of deterrence and ensuring the political freedom and territorial integrity of its members, it calls on the Alliance to establish clearer guidelines for when it will venture outside its borders, set the conditions for success in Afghanistan, and be ready to act as a partner in a comprehensive approach to solving complex security problems.[25]

On the surface, there may be nothing particularly unique or transformative in these three macro-tasks. Indeed, the panel is of the mind that a new Strategic Concept does not need to completely usurp the previous one. Nevertheless, their observation that "the NATO of 2020 will not be the same as the NATO […] of 2010"[26] suggest that a new generation of security risks may evolve alongside older ones, and that the Alliance will be compelled to evolve in order to tackle them.

Not surprisingly, each of these three objectives touches upon the operational support challenge. To credibly execute the collective defence task, the panel calls for basic military capabilities

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[25]*NATO 2020: Assured Security; Dynamic Engagement*, http://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/experts report.pdf, pp. 7-8., accessed on 20 May 2010.
[26] Ibid., p. 8.

backed up by contingency planning, focussed exercises, and "sound logistics" to ensure mutual confidence among the allies while reducing the chance of miscalculation by potential adversaries.[27] By carefully considering the strategic and operational limitations of the Alliance, by restraining any inclination to expand its remit beyond what an essentially military alliance can deliver outside the Euro-Atlantic area, the type and quantity of operational support capability can be more accurately judged. To address this theoretical problem, however, is not to ignore practical ones. Afghanistan highlights the need for political cohesion, unified command, and the ability to deploy forces across vast distances and sustain them for extended periods of time. To be part of the solution to complex security problems, the panel suggests that NATO may "serve as a source of specialized assistance" to external partners. It is not difficult to conceive of such assistance taking the form of strategic transport and sustainment in areas prone to state fragility or failure.

The report also makes the case that expeditionary operations and those falling under Article 5 (territorial defence) should be reviewed to determine where there are areas of overlapping requirements. It observes that the principal similarity between these two missions lies in the fact that they require well-prepared forces and support assets.[28] Thus even if allies do not foresee a scenario in which a general war on home soil is likely, and even if they are reluctant to commit to overseas missions at a higher level of intensity (i.e., Afghanistan), they will still need to make prudent investments in support capabilities to handle generic crisis management operations.

While the panel's recommendations are in line with those of those of recent summits, they go a step further, arguing that achieving deployability and sustainability goals could be furthered by the creation of a "NATO Deployment Agency". This would be responsible for "consolidating all aspects of Alliance preparations for rapid deployment"—a move that would enable allies with ready assets but modest power-projection means to fully realize their potential. Other recommended reforms include "new informal pooling arrangements, especially for lift."[29] This is undoubtedly a veiled endorsement of the afore-mentioned non-consensual transformation—specifically the Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) whose success in bringing together a group of NATO and non-NATO nations to buy and support a trio of C-17 transport aircraft may be replicated elsewhere.

Another useful contribution to the unofficial guidance is the *Multiple Futures Project*, promulgated by ACT in April of 2009. A comprehensive and innovative study, it not intended to be the military's formal contribution to the Strategic Concept review. Rather, it was undertaken to support strategic decision-makers as they contemplated the relative nature and gravity of future challenges and what NATO should do to address them. The report postulates that international security may evolve along four distinct trajectories, explores the strategic characteristics of each scenario, and deduces possible capability implications for each. The characteristics of the scenarios need not be repeated verbatim here. Suffice to say that they encompass combinations and permutations of intra-state turmoil (based on demographic change, socio-economic instability, bad governance, incompatible belief systems) and trouble between states and/or non-state actors. The latter includes, inter alia, resource competition, the proliferation of disruptive

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., p. 40.
[29] Ibid., p. 41.

technologies, old-fashioned rivalries, shifting alliances, transnational criminality, uncontrolled migration, and an inability of state actors to anticipate let alone deal with these issues.[30]

In an evaluation of the security implications of these outcomes, the report recommends that NATO retain a robust collective defence but cautions that the circumstances under which it invokes Article 5 may change, as a conventional attack is but one possibility. Future threats are expected to be "hybrid" in nature, encompassing direct and indirect attack on the political, social and economic superstructure of both advanced and fragile societies, and in previously unanticipated ways which take advantage of their vulnerabilities. NATO will have to address this transformation of the conflict paradigm by morphing "from a predominately defence-based military alliance into a comprehensive political and military security community" employing the Comprehensive Approach and improved partnerships with external actors.[31]

The military consequences of this are many: the physical protection of populations against asymmetric threats topped the list, followed by the need to conduct operations against non-state actors, preventing disruptions to the flow of vital resources, and forging effective civil-military partnerships.[32] What effect does this have on the capability domains, of which "sustainment" is one? Clearly, any sizeable operation at the domestic or international level, and especially those requiring expeditionary and combat capability in austere environments, will require responsive and robust logistical support. Forces will have to transition seamlessly from lower- to higher-intensity operations, but in both cases the amount of operational support will have to be measured by intensity of the activity and its expected duration. Specific capability enhances cited include air mobility for rapid response.

Interestingly, the report recommends the development of a "comprehensive maritime strategy" to address threats which migrate from land to coastal areas and territorial/high seas. Afloat logistics will therefore require attention, and the feasibility of sea-basing should be explored to ensure that support is available when a host nation cannot provide it.[33]

From this official and unofficial policy guidance it is clear that NATO's vision of its place within the international security environment has shifted from one based on territorial defence and stabilization in its "near abroad" to one preoccupied with complex emergencies requiring expeditionary deployments alongside external partners. The main deductions reveal that certain aspects of conflict remain unchanged—namely the need for high-quality, rapidly-deployable joint forces with appropriate logistics support. The guidance rightly avoids trying to quantify the type and amount of support required by the current generation of operations; this is best left to military planners. Yet the gradual and unmistakeable expansion of the original NATO task list compels members to plan for activities which render static defences obsolete.

The Canadian Forces have, by necessity, long maintained an expeditionary mindset. Commitments to come to the aid of European allies or participate in UN operations in the

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[30] Allied Command Transformation, *Multiple Futures Project: Navigating Toward 2030 (Final Report)* (Norfolk, VA: Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, 2009).

[31] Ibid., p. 40.

[32] Ibid., p. 44. Another implication—protecting command, control, communications, and computer networks—are less dependent on operational support, since in the case of a domestic emergency they will be largely static.

[33] Ibid., pp. 62-63.

developing world have compelled the CF to ensure that deployability and sustainability are at the heart of strategic and operational planning. Notable is the use of the Canadian Army's five operational functions―command, sense, act, shield, and *sustain*―in the NATO Multiple Futures document.[34] This illustrates the importance attached to operational support by the current generation of military planners and their determination to situate it firmly within the process of NATO transformation. As to the political maturation of the Alliance, consistent encouragement by policy-makers to improve responsiveness and sustainability―through national and multinational solutions―may be reflected in Canada's participation in the sealift consortium, and may be credited with its temporary participation in the SALIS program. The highly-regarded American website globalsecurity.com has gone as far as to link the Canadian Navy's plan to acquire an expanded afloat logistics capability in the form of the Joint Support Ship with the policy direction given by allied governments.[35] Whether or not this is the case, the acquisition of a capability that allows vessels to mount expeditionary operations and lend support to other services is entirely consistent with the letter and spirit of NATO's strategic guidance.

Clearly, a new Strategic Concept which mandates significant change in NATO's *raison d'être* would likely bring about major force structure changes, and would influence the weight given to operational support. Two issue-areas considered to be central to national security in the 21st century―cyber defence and energy security―have been the subject of debate by authorities looking into the future of the Alliance.[36] But should they qualify as candidates for the revised Strategic Concept, the operational support implications might still be unclear. The defence of Alliance computer networks is not likely to require the transport and sustainment of substantial forces to a crisis area. Defence will take place first and foremost at the national level (with the private sector taking responsibility for its own networks), although guidance may be provided by the Co-operative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Tallinn, Estonia. Similarly, an Alliance-wide approach to the security of energy supplies will become a going concern only insofar as the allies derive their resources from insecure providers and transport them along insecure routes. Pipelines conveying oil and/or liquefied natural gas from Russia to Europe are unlikely to be threatened by the parties whose economies depend on secure trade. However, the transit of resources over land and maritime corridors infested with pirates and/or terrorists might provoke a multi-national response if the disruption is widespread and persistent.[37] Operation OCEAN SHIELD, the NATO maritime task force engaged in counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia, may herald a new willingness by the members (and select partners) to safeguard the so-called "global commons" from non-traditional threats.[38] Long-term deployments to conduct surveillance and interdiction operations in distant oceans will require afloat logistics in the form of tankers/re-supply vessels, as well as access to shore-based support.

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[34] Ibid., p. 42.

[35] http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/europe/nato-sealift.htm, accessed on 14 March 2010. The CF's rationale for JSS speaks of the need to build "a self-sufficient navy." This is consistent with long-standing NATO policy which states that logistical support for one's forces should be a national responsibility. http://www.navy.forces.gc.ca/cms/10/10-a_eng.asp?id=463, accessed on 14 March 2010.

[36] Allied Command Transformation, *Multiple Futures Project*, p. 32.

[37] The definition of "widespread" and "persistent" will inevitably be flexible. Frequent (and spectacular) Taliban attacks on NATO fuel convoys in Pakistan have not yet had a deleterious impact on operations in Afghanistan.

[38] Jamie Shea, "Energy Security: NATO's potential role," http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2006/issue3/english/special1.html, accessed on 20 September 2010.

As of mid-2010 all the strategic guidance has pointed toward an expansive definition of collective defence, even if it papers over fissures over what the Alliance's level of ambition should be. But despite the frustrating inability to achieve stability in Afghanistan and the reticence of some members to fully subscribe to an expeditionary paradigm, there is little evidence to suggest that the Alliance will undergo a period of counter-transformation, which would entail a retreat into its Euro-Atlantic bastion and a studied ignorance of the evolving threat envelope. Future governments might decide otherwise, but for the moment Canada and its allies will find security landscape and the logistical imperative no less salient or less challenging than they have been in the past decade.

4.2   Enlargement

The political transformation of NATO is most evident in the gradual growth of its membership, which has been alluded to above. The first former Warsaw Pact nations were admitted in 1999 and subsequent rounds of expansion have extended the Alliance's boundaries to the borders of Russia and the Caucasus. Further rounds are not ruled out. According to the Western narrative, the purpose of the "open door" policy was to build a Europe "whole and free," defined as a collection of sovereign states wedded to the liberal-democratic model. As such states are unlikely to wage war on each other, NATO enlargement (complimented by the concurrent enlargement of the EU) was widely viewed to have a stabilizing influence on a continent that had endured the most ruinous wars in history. Through the Partnership for Peace and the Membership Action Plan (MAP),[39] NATO has enjoyed some success in shepherding aspirants toward transforming civil-military relations and their static defence efforts into civilian-controlled, inter-operable and internationally-minded ones. [40]

The strategic decision to alter the map of NATO carried with it obvious political and resource implications for all members. David Yost put it succinctly, saying that "[the] allies must be able to project capabilities to every part of the significantly enlarged treaty area."[41] In putting their names to the various summit declarations the new entrants endorsed the shift toward expeditionary operations and support functions. As the territory to be safeguarded was enlarged (despite a pledge made to Moscow that no sizeable forces from existing members would be moved eastward), the Alliance's internal lines of communication grew longer. Thus despite the end of the Cold War the logistical challenge theoretically remained and would do so as long as members put stock in the Article 5 security guarantee.

As post-Cold War budget cutbacks took hold in the 1990s, the addition of more players promised to spread the collective defence burden, adding more resources for operations as well as greater political weight to deterrence. However, as noted above, consensus on the need to operate beyond the Euro-Atlantic space has exposed cleavages in strategic outlook. While the new members have

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[39] Described as an ante-room for membership, MAP has been restricted to former members of the Warsaw Pact, as well as the Baltic states. Those further afield (i.e., former Soviet republics) have been offered membership in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)—a body dedicated to consultation and dialogue on a variety of security-related issues.
[40] The MAP provides advice, assistance and support to applicant countries as well as feedback on their progress. Seven countries who were part of the second round of NATO expansion in 2004 took part in this program.
[41] Yost, "NATO's evolving purposes and the next Strategic Concept," p. 496.

readily embraced the collective defence dimension, many have mixed feelings toward a NATO that seems more committed to out-of-area missions than it is to the defence of the home front. [42] But it is not just lingering suspicions of an allegedly revanchist Russia that has complicated what was intended to be a straight-forward era of strategic transformation. Initial efforts to reform and re-cast militaries from the Soviet model into ones resembling their Western counterparts have given way to a degree of complacency. Having worked hard to be admitted to the club, some recent members have made halting efforts to transform their forces into more deployable packages. This has been partially compensated by their active participation in NATO-sponsored operational support capability development programs such as the Strategic Airlift Capability, with Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovenia teaming up with established members, including the United States.

The location of the strategic airlift wing, in Pápa, Hungary, speaks to the willingness of the new members to devote infrastructure to the common operational support effort, even if the motivations include the financial and political benefits accruing to a member-state fortunate enough to be chosen as host nation. (The location of Pápa air base allows aircrew flying in from North America to reach deeper into Europe from which they, like their continental partners, can then reach further afield.) Similarly, the 2005 agreement between the US and Romania which would see the former pay to upgrade and utilize the Mihail Kogalniceanu air base near the Black Sea has facilitated operations in support of NATO in Afghanistan.[43]

What effect might the continuing enlargement of NATO have on the operational support picture? The possible membership of other Balkan states (Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina) will expand NATO's geographical remit. However, these small, cash-poor countries are unlikely to bring significant resources to the table. Further enlargement to the east and south-east seems to be a moot point. Belarus has shown no inclination toward becoming a Western-style democracy and the defeat of the pro-NATO Yushchenko government in Ukraine has put paid to that country's halting bid for membership (although the Ukrainian cargo airline Antonov Airlines will likely remain a provider of strategic lift for some time to come[44]). Georgia's candidacy is highly unlikely in the short term. The continuing presence of Russian forces in neighbouring Abkhazia and South Ossetia hangs like the proverbial sword of Damocles over any effort by Tbilisi to forge closer ties with the allies, notwithstanding its respectable contribution to operations in Afghanistan.

Both Sweden and Finland, two members of the Partnership for Peace, have voiced periodic interest in joining the Alliance. Their defence/national security policies discuss the possibility[45] but the alignment of domestic political forces currently does not favour that the final step be

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[42] Interview with Bulgarian foreign ministry official, Wilton Park, United Kingdom, 30 January 2008.

[43] http://www.military.com/NewsContent/0,13319,82208,00.html, accessed on 4 January 2010. The base will host 100 troops on a permanent basis and 1,500 others on a rotating basis. "The base has been heavily used by the United States since the Sept. 11 attacks to transport troops and equipment for operations in Afghanistan and Iraq."

[44] The company operates in conjunction with its Russian counterpart, Volga-Dnepr, and owns seven AN-124 and one AN-225 heavy transport aircraft.

[45] Finnish Ministry of Defence, *Finish Security and Defence Policy 2009*, http://www.vnk.fi/julkaisukansio/ 2009/j11-turvallisuus-j12-sakerhets-j13-finnish/pdf/en.pdf, p. 81, accessed on 29 March 2010. Also, Robert Dalsjo, "From Neutrality to Solidarity—The Transformation of Sweden's Defence and Security Policies," *Nordiques*, No. 20, October 2009, p. 6.

taken; neither government has asked to enter the Membership Action Plan. Still, as the two non-NATO members of SAC, they have demonstrated their awareness of the need to develop robust operational support capabilities and may be counted on to bring financial and human resources to bear on UN-approved NATO missions. Sweden has exploited this capability in support of its contingent in Afghanistan, and has also contributed aircrew for the first missions flown by the SAC wing's C-17s. Historically non-aligned and traditionally focussed on the Baltic Sea area, Stockholm has declared that its armed forces will be NATO-interoperable. While its own organic airlift capacity is limited, it is in the process of acquiring a 15,000-tonne combat support ship for its navy. This will give it unprecedented logistical capability in any coalition naval operation in which it chooses to participate.

Given the discord over whether to admit former Soviet republics, it would seems that the admission of the non-aligned states of northern Europe present the most politically promising way of continuing the process of transforming NATO. It would bring in members with advanced armed forces and economies that can contribute meaningfully to capability development. The value of enlargement lies in the pooling of resources and the increased strategic reach that comes from the broadening of allied territory. Theoretically, Canada's defence responsibilities extend further as the Alliance transforms. Practically, it also stands to benefit from the partnerships that result.

4.3 Relations with External Partners

Although hopes for peace and security in 1945 were invested in the newly-minted United Nations, the original members of the Alliance remained committed to the idea of self-help in the international system. National defence, they maintained, was ultimately the preserve of nation-states; it could not be contracted out to supra-national organizations—a lesson painfully learned by the failure of the League of Nations to prevent precisely the types of armed cross-border attacks that led to World War II. But the Washington Treaty also allowed for the transformation of the original, seven-member Atlantic community. Article 10 served as a mechanism through which other European states willing to commit to the security of the North Atlantic space could gain entry into the club. The various rounds of enlargement during (and after) the Cold War attest to the utility of this provision, and the overall flexibility of the North Atlantic partnership.

Still, in an era when security was firmly state-centric, it is not surprising that the framers of the Treaty did not fully appreciate the limits of their vision in 1949. As the Cold War became steadily globalized there was no thought of extending membership to states outside the Euro-Atlantic area.[46] Nor was there any mention of formal or informal partnerships with the growing number of international organizations that began to proliferate after 1945. The Treaty referred to the United Nations only insofar as it pledged that it would act in accordance with the UN Charter to preserve the hard-won peace. Although the wording of the Treaty seemed to subordinate the Alliance to the Security Council, this would soon be considered unworkable as it would give the veto-wielding Soviets control over how (or whether) the democratic nations could defend themselves.

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[46] A possible exception was the designation of Algeria as Alliance territory, as it was considered part of metropolitan France in 1949. US national security planners opted instead for a series of looser regional alliances such as the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Australia- New Zealand-US (ANZUS) partnership.

Following the end of the Cold War NATO and the UN gained a mutual if grudging respect as partners in the resolution of the various Balkans crises. With the latter's approval, NATO assumed primary responsibility for the implementation of the Dayton peace accords which brought an end to the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Following a difficult few years of "peace-keeping" in the region, the world body handed over the enforcement and monitoring duties to the Atlantic Alliance in 1995. NATO's Implementation Force (IFOR) and subsequent Stabilization Force (SFOR) were heavily-armed formations designed to deter and, if necessary, thwart threats to the fragile peace.

The same division of responsibility was manifest in the aftermath of Operation ALLIED FORCE as NATO, once again with UN approval, established a strong military presence in Kosovo. The employment of combat forces in a peace support context was something of a novelty, as previous large missions had been deployed in an inter-positional fashion―that is, between belligerent states and with their expressed consent. The Balkans missions were a response to a transforming security environment―one in which a mixture of traditional strategic considerations and humanitarian impulses compelled Western leaders to take strong action to mitigate the effects of war-related state failure. But despite the size and configuration of the forces deployed, the proximity of the Balkans to NATO territory did not unduly tax the operational support efforts of the contributing nations.[47] Consequently, decision-makers did not single it out as a capability area worthy of special notice.

The abrupt transformation of the security environment after 9/11 has, by contrast, had a noticeable impact on how operational support is dealt with. As noted above, the various summit declarations since 2002 have consistently emphasized joint, expeditionary operations and the relevance of appropriate (even multinational) logistics. More recent communiqués reflect a growing awareness of the desirability of partnering with non-NATO nations and organizations in the pursuit of common interests. The Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) was established to facilitate dialogue with states who, by virtue of geography, would never likely be given serious consideration for membership, but who nevertheless might be inclined to contribute to stability in their wider neighbourhood. At the 2004 Istanbul summit the members pledged to "put special focus on engaging with our Partners in the strategically important regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia" and promised to provide them with opportunities to transform their armed forces and make them more inter-operable which would in turn enhance their participation in NATO-led operations, in return for which they may be granted a role in mission planning and execution.[48]

The Group of Experts went even further in *NATO 2020*. Citing the key contributions of Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea in Afghanistan, it encouraged NATO to seek out partners with similar interests and values―be they individual states or multilateral security entities. Although hope for substantive co-operation with the states of the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East (through the Mediterranean Dialogue and the Istanbul Co-operation Initiative) was initially high, this has not come to pass. The experts remain optimistic, suggesting that

> NATO should do more to deepen its partnerships with countries outside the Euro-Atlantic region by expanding the list of shared activities while preserving the ability of individual partners to form tailored co-operative relationships with

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[47] The original Canadian contribution to the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was not deployed by strategic sea/airlift, but by rail from Canadian Forces Europe.

[48] http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2004/p04-096e.htm, accessed on 3 June 2009.

the Alliance […]. The Strategic Concept should outline ways to give operational partners a regular and meaningful voice in shaping strategy and decisions on missions to which they contribute.[49]

The panel raised the possibility that "leading democracies" in Asia, Latin America, and Africa could conceivably participate in future missions. But it did not rule out collaboration with China or Russia, both of whom partner with allied navies in their counter-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean. Although one may take the Group's recommendations to mean that partners would be approached to provide deployable forces, it would not stretch the imagination to conceive of a partnership involving support infrastructure such as ports and airfields near a crisis area―something akin to the CF's innovative Operational Support Hub project. The improvement in Russia's mood following the termination of Washington's European-based ballistic missile defence project may have a salutary effect on re-supply and repatriation of NATO forces in/from Afghanistan. One report suggested that Canada might negotiate airspace and landing rights at Russian bases in order to facilitate the departure of its forces in 2011.[50]

As with enlargement, partnerships with external actors have the potential to increase the pool of capabilities required for contemporary operations. However, one of the values of partnering is that the pool may grow even if the Alliance ceases to take in new members. Thus the solidification of the boundaries of NATO―a likely eventuality―does not bring the whole transformational project to a halt. Capability development may still proceed along formal or ad hoc lines with states in any corner of the globe.[51]

The same is true for institutional partnerships, which may also hold good prospects for easing the operational support burden. To be sure, institutional tie-ups are unlikely, but overlapping or complimentary mandates are generally, if sometimes reluctantly, recognized. The Balkans saw the hand-over of security duties from the UN to NATO, even while the former remained in place to oversee the political evolution of the former Yugoslavia's successor states. In 2004 NATO turned over stabilization and policing matters in Bosnia to the other great regional security organization: the European Union.

While the UN has very few organic logistical capabilities to lend to allied efforts, the EU is making slow but steady progress to establish itself as a credible international security actor. This has led to low-level yet meaningful co-operation in Africa, where NATO and EU air movement personnel organized the airlift of some 37,500 African Union (AU) troops, civilian police and military observers in and out the Darfur region of Sudan. NATO and EU specialists also helped staff an AU air movement cell at the latter's headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This may be the first of many requests from the resource-strapped AU that call upon NATO's logistical capabilities. As NATO has pledged to support EU-led crisis management operations, there is every possibility that it may be ordered to do the same for the EU, not least because so many European nations have long taken an interest in improving security in Africa.

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[49] *NATO 2020*, pp. 29-30.

[50] John Ivison, "Russia ready to help us leave Afghanistan," *National Post*, 21 October 2010. http://www.nationalpost.com/news/canada/Russia+ready+help+leave+Afghanistan/3703566/story.html, accessed on 22 October 2010.

[51] The A-Z Index on the NATO website lists countries with whom the Alliance has recently collaborated.

Closer to home, NATO has taken note of the drive toward establishing a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) which has may yet see the alignment of the various national defence efforts for multinational expeditionary operations up to but not including major combat. The Istanbul summit communiqué recognized the compatibility between NATO's Prague Capabilities Commitment and the European Union's Capabilities Action Plan which aims for "completion of the development of rapidly deployable battlegroups, including the identification of appropriate strategic lift, sustainability and disembarkation assets".[52]

The entry of the EU onto the military landscape and its stated desire to play a role outside its borders has raised questions about possible duplication of effort with NATO. The matter has been partially resolved by offering the latter a right of first refusal when a crisis erupts, as well as a general recognition that the EU can do what NATO currently cannot: bring to bear its formidable non-military capabilities (or "soft power") in complex environments. Despite oft-spoken fears that the EU could one day assume full responsibility for security on the European mainland, no state holding membership in both organizations believes that collective defence is yesterday's task. Accordingly, none considers the EU to be a substitute for NATO.[53]

Nevertheless, Europe's ambitions require tangible assets―some of which member governments are already obliged to provide for NATO commitments. The idea of EU "borrowing" allied resources has been codified in the "Berlin Plus" agreement whereby Europe would obtain assured access to NATO planning capabilities and assets for EU-led crisis management operations. The afore-mentioned SALIS and SAC also point to tangible progress in marrying NATO and EU requirements without the need for a formal inter-organizational agreement. What has not yet been explored is Berlin Plus in reverse: as the dynamics of modern crises call for a comprehensive approach, any future NATO-led operation may have to borrow capabilities from the EU.

If EU states "Europeanize" their capability development plans, pooling infrastructure, logistics support, and even defence industrial policy, could this benefit the NATO allies? For Canada, EU primacy creates uncertainties such as the use of CF personnel attached to NATO operational units (i.e., the airborne early warning wing). Lending such capabilities to an organization in which Canada has no representation would require Ottawa to place great (some would say unrealistic) faith in the EU's strategic judgement and leadership abilities. As the Europeans have not yet organized and led a sizeable mission in complex circumstances, this may be a dubious proposition.

The new Strategic Concept must spell out the extent of NATO's remit lest it drift into relationships that may prove costly, unwieldy, and counter-productive to overall cohesion. But nor should it shy away from forging partnerships in challenging or unlikely places. The International Security Assistance Force is a collection of 37 mainly allied nations. Although NATO-led, it serves as a powerful demonstration of broader international will―a reminder that broader security goals oblige the old allies to adopt a less Euro-centric approach to coalition-building. Some relationships may endure post-Afghanistan, although many external partners―for

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[52]   http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/100217%20Factsheet%20-%20Battlegroups%20-%20version%204_EN.pdf, accessed on 12 February 2010.
[53] Alvaro de Vasconcelos, "2020: defence beyond the transatlantic paradigm," in A. de Vasconcelos, ed., *What ambitions for European defence in 2020?* 2nd edition (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2009), p. 19.

reasons of resource scarcity, domestic politics or strategic outlook—are more likely to favour cooperation on a case-by-case basis. (The difficulties in securing supply lines for even non-lethal cargo through Russian airspace to Afghanistan are indicative of Moscow's continuing antipathy toward the Alliance, even if it largely agrees with the goals of the mission.) Some European NATO members feel the same way, as there are practical as well as political difficulties in establishing deep partnerships with those who do not adhere to NATO's liberal-democratic creed.[54]

Still, even tactical alliances can yield practical advantages—be it Australian C-17s, Korean logistics units, Japanese support ships, or access to Kyrgyz air bases. Canada's partnership with the United Arab Emirates, although bi-lateral rather than NATO-sponsored, has had a significant effect on the CF's ability to support operations in South Asia. It has opened the possibility for on-going access to the air base currently used to transit supplies and personnel in and out of Afghanistan. A delicate yet sustained diplomatic effort to preserve the relationship—or to find a suitably close alternative—after the NATO operation winds down would serve the CF's operational support objectives greatly.

NATO has begun to transform into an organization where the old allies are increasingly looking to enlist the help of willing partners in pursuit of common security goals. Nowadays, a NATO operation may be seen in terms of concentric circles in which interests, values, and relevant capabilities situate the partner close to (or distant from) the main contributors and decision-makers. Even if we are not witnessing the birth of a new security network, it is clear that Noetzel and Scheer's theory of a tiered NATO may need to be revised as non-members seek and are granted preferred status akin to the "major non-NATO ally" status conferred by the US on countries with whom it enjoys close defence relations.

A useful summation of the challenge the lies head for NATO may be found in a study commissioned by the Brussels-based Security and Defence Forum:

> In the coming decades, NATO will have to cope with two main processes of transformation. At the operations level, Afghanistan will test NATO's transformative capacities and will give some indication about the way in which NATO could be used in the near future, especially in [counter-insurgency] contingencies. At the political level, NATO will pursue its renovation by developing into a network in which the European allies are […] only one pillar with, next to them, [PfP] partners and friends (contact countries). Besides them, NATO will also need regional partners if it wants to confirm itself as a true global organization.[55]

There is little doubt that Canada will seek to maintain its seat at the table of an organization that is globalizing as much by default as by design. But as the next section demonstrates, the financial

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[54] Rebecca Moore, "Partnership Goes Global: The Role of Nonmember, Non-European Union States in the Evolution of NATO," in G. Aybet and R. Moore, eds., *NATO in Search of a Vision* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), p. 229.

[55] Alain de Neve, Pieter-Jan Parrein, "NATO, the EU and the New US Administration," in "Re-launching NATO or just re-branding it?" *Security & Defence Agenda Discussion Paper*, ed. by Giles Merritt (Brussels: Security & Defence Agenda, 2009), p. 13.

costs of membership may have significant impact on members' level of ambition, and with it plans to ensure that operational support needs are met.

4.4   Economic/Budgetary Issues

It has been stated that military transformation takes place within a larger political context. To this should be added an economic context, as the maintenance/enhancement of military capabilities requires sustained political commitment, which itself depends on an obliging treasury.

As of mid-2010 there were initial signs of recovery from the global economic crisis. But as Hartley and Solomon assert in their NATO Defence College research paper, the recovery will be slow and will be characterized by slow GDP growth, persistent joblessness with attendant loss of tax revenue, and government indebtedness.[56] As defence budgets are often the favoured targets of governments wishing to reign in spending, it is almost certain that member states will continue to fall well short of the two per cent of gross domestic product that has long been considered by NATO sufficient to maintain an adequate collective defence.

How might this impact transformation and the development of key capabilities? Clearly, the strategic environment will continue to change, and members will likely strive to attract new members and forge beneficial arrangements with partners, regardless of the size of their defence expenditures. But potential defence budget cuts will have individual and collective consequences. To illustrate the point, consider that the two NATO members most wedded to the notion of expeditionary operations―the United States and the United Kingdom―are openly discussing significant cuts. Labouring under a US$13-trillion debt, lawmakers in Washington have struck a bi-partisan congressional committee to look into the contributions that the Pentagon could make to bring America's finances under control. The Sustainable Defense Task Force has suggested cutting US$1.1-trillion over the next decade. This follows an order by Defense Secretary Robert Gates to find US$100-billion in cuts over the next five years. Possible economies include deleting five army brigades and four Marine battalions comprising 30,000 troops[57]―a not unsubstantial portion of the expeditionary land force. Other suggested cuts include forces stationed in Europe and Asia, which would presumably mean the rationalization of infrastructure used to provide operational support. The air force will see limits imposed on its still formidable logistical capabilities with the termination of further orders for the C-17 airlifter.

In Europe, the UK is grappling with what Prime Minster David Cameron has termed "a staggering amount of debt," and cuts ranging from 10-15 per cent were widely considered to be in the offing.[58] Defence Secretary Liam Fox said that the Conservative government would have to "act ruthlessly and without sentiment" in bringing the UK's defence effort in line with fiscal realities[59]―a suggestion that major force structure changes were being contemplated. Answers to

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[56] K. Hartley and B. Solomon, "NATO and the Economic and Financial Crisis," NATO Defence College Research Paper, No. 52 (Rome: NATO Defence College, October 2009), pp. 2-3.

[57] William Matthews, "Bipartisan Panel Offers Ways to Cut U.S. Spending," *Defense News*, 11 June 2010, http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4667417&c=LAN&s=TOP, accessed on 11 June 2010.

[58] Craig Whitlock, "NATO allies poised to slash military budgets: Gates urges other cost savings," *The Washington Post*, 9 June 2010, p. A12.

[59] J. Kirkup and T. Harding, "Liam Fox says Britain must act 'ruthlessly' over defence cuts," *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 June 2010, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/defence/7826148/Liam-Fox-says-Britain-must-act-ruthlessly-over-defence-cuts.html, accessed on 14 June 2010.

what capability areas would suffer have recently come to light with the publication of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. Although the document re-committed the UK to an expeditionary posture, and overall defence cuts of 7.5 per cent were milder than had been anticipated, operational support capacity will suffer from the premature retirement of all 25 C-130J Hercules transport aircraft and at least one *Bay*-class amphibious transport ship.[60]

The pain is likely to spread to NATO members in the "status quo" camp, with Germany, Italy, and France contemplating significant reductions in personnel and procurement.[61] But it is US economic weakness that is particularly troubling, as America is rightly, if unfairly, viewed as the capability provider of last resort. The cumulative effect of major cuts by the most wealthy NATO nation does yet portend to deal a death blow to efforts to maintain or enhance operational support capabilities, although such an outcome cannot be ruled out. Indeed, the possibility is heightened by the emerging consensus that the allies, weary of their exertions in Afghanistan, may be unwilling to undertake another large expeditionary operation in the foreseeable future.[62]

Canada's own defence budget will likely be stable for the next five years, although the rate of growth will now slow. The Conservative government has pledged to claw back $525-million in fiscal year 2012-13 and $1-billion annually thereafter.[63] Still, its commitment to improving overall capability looks strong, and operational support capabilities are on a relatively solid footing. Two classes of transport aircraft—long-range C-17 Globemasters and medium-range C-130J Super Hercules—are in or entering service. A renewed commitment to acquire a number of joint support ships has been publicized, and the CF has now chartered a civilian roll-on/roll-off vessel to transport vehicles and cargo to distant theatres. Nevertheless, Canada's historical reliance on US assistance will not disappear with the advent of these new capabilities—particularly where the mission profile calls for larger contributions of forces for longer periods of time.[64] Seen in this light, Ottawa's decision to cease participation in the SALIS program may seem premature. A "surge" airlift capacity provided by the pool of commonly-funded aircraft to augment the quartet of C-17s and chartered sealift might be prudent.

Apart from the effect of austerity programs on national power-projection and sustainment capabilities, collective austerity in the form of zero growth in common (NATO-wide) funding or multinational funding may lead to the slow-down or even halting of certain transformational initiatives. Severe and prolonged economic turmoil may cause members to reduce contributions to programs such as SALIS or SAC. Even the troubled A400M medium airlifter program—touted as essential to European defence integration—may not be immune. Having had to come up with

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[60] UK Government, *Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review*, http://www.direct.gov.uk/prod_consum_dg/groups/dg_digitalassets/@dg/@en/documents/digitalasset/dg_191634.pdf?CID=PDF&PLA=furl&CRE=sdsr, accessed on 22 October 2010.

[61] T. Kingston, A. Müller, P. Tran, "Budget Knives Come Out in Europe," *Defense News*, 31 May 2010, pp. 1,4.

[62] J. Hale, "EU Struggles To Develop Its Own Defense Identity," *Defense News*, 7 June 2010, p. 14. The article quotes Nick Whitney, former head of the European Defence Agency (EDA), as saying that neither the EU or NATO will have "the appetite for distant military adventures in the coming years."

[63] Pete Evans, "Steady budget offers few surprises," http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2010/03/04/budget-flaherty-parliament-ottawa.html, accessed on 8 March 2010.

[64] This is in contrast to smaller, short-term deployments such as the mission to earthquake-ravaged Haiti in early 2010. The CF was able to deploy and sustain relief forces and evacuate non-combatants using its own resources.

an extra €3.5-billion to bail out the struggling program, several members of the consortium have raised the prospect of curtailing their orders.[65] Among these are Britain and Germany, two countries which have shown a willingness to deploy substantial forces abroad. Their unwillingness to accept the full number of airframes originally contracted could affect NATO's overall capacity to support future operations.

One potentially transformative initiative mentioned previously—permanent structured co-operation—may paradoxically be a victim of the economic downturn. Although it is intended to spread the cost of capability development, austerity programs will reduce the number of member states who can afford to make even modest contributions. This may deepen friction over equitable burden-sharing. Similarly, suggestions that members pool their defence industrial capacity by seeking tie-ups with firms producing similar products may be non-starter by governments trying to realize short-term electoral gains. The protection of domestic programs and capabilities is perhaps to be expected in tough fiscal times, although according to Hartley and Solomon this is now incompatible with NATO's vision of itself:

> The current NATO doctrine of crisis response puts a considerable emphasis on the projection of power outside the borders of NATO member states [which] implies the need for heavy investment in strategic air and sea transport […]. This will place a heavy burden on the large NATO allies since these nations have made the necessary capital investment in these areas.[66]

How might allies mitigate the effects of budgetary pressure? Hartley and Solomon suggest that a new Strategic Concept—driven in part by resource constraints—can spur growth in certain capability areas if the investments result in "private benefits" to members.[67] For example, the decision to stand up the SAC program meant that the advantages of hosting an NATO air base (such as investments in base infrastructure and the spin-offs on the local economy from stationing personnel on or near the base) accrued to resource-constrained Hungary. Thus while NATO is intent on reducing overhead and jettisoning infrastructure required for the Cold War, the transformation of the political (and economic) environment may spur allies to discover ways of being innovative in capability development with the enthusiastic support of their more reluctant or cash-poor contributors.

Another possible solution has been offered by Secretary-General Rasmussen, who opined that increasing the use of role specialization, whereby individual members or informal groupings would provide a given capability for the whole Alliance and pay for it by curtailing funding in other areas. (This would be distinct from projects such as SAC, which rely on pooled funding but provide airlift only for the members of the pool.) Said he:

> [A]ll Allies should maintain basic war fighting capabilities, such as infantry and combat engineers, and be prepared to share the risk of actually using them in our operations. But we cannot expect all nations, even the bigger ones, to cover the full spectrum of high-end capabilities, such as strategic air transport […]. If we were able to agree on who does what in these increasingly expensive areas, then

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[65] T. Hepher and S. Siebold, "Special Report: The incredible saga of Europe's A400M," http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6570NK20100608, accessed on 8 June 2010.
[66] Hartley and Solomon, "NATO and the Economic and Financial Crisis," p. 5.
[67] Ibid.

nations―or groups of nations―could sacrifice certain national capabilities and re-invest in their specific area of expertise.[68]

Should the recent decision by the UK and France to develop a joint brigade and to share aircraft carriers prove to be strategically justifiable and operationally feasible, it may only be a matter of time before they see the wisdom in marrying up their respective logistical capacities.

At a time when all allies, including Canada, are grappling with the question of what burdens a transformed NATO places upon them, such initiatives are worthy of exploration. They may become increasingly necessary as demographic changes―characterized by ageing populations and non-European immigration―resulting in demands for costly social welfare programs and less reflexively Atlanticist foreign policies. But they may also have the effect of (re-)building solidarity between the North American and European allies at a time when shifting trade patterns to the Pacific Rim may bring about a (partial) strategic re-orientation of the Canada and the United States.[69]

Despite (or, perhaps, because of) looming defence budget cuts, Canada will undoubtedly continue to look to the US and Europe as a key security partner in the coming years, and this partnership will continue to find its voice in NATO. Collaboration in problem-solving and capability development will be a necessity as much as an option. Security - perhaps the most important of public goods―will not come without cost. To influence a situation in a manner desired by the Euro-Atlantic community and its partners will require useable forces the ability to deploy and sustain them. Thus the wisdom of any forthcoming, treasury-mandated defence re-alignments will have to be evaluated in part on the degree to which they protect and promote excellence in operational support.

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[68] Address by Anders Fogh Rasmussen at Belgian Royal High Institute for Defence, 26 April 2010, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/opinions_62923.htm, accessed on 26 May 2010.
[69] Jeffrey Simon, "The Future of the Alliance: Is Demography Destiny?" in Aybet and Moore, *NATO in Search of a Vision*, p. 210. Simon notes that while immigration may go some way to maintaining the size of the cohort available for military service, the largely non-European origin of the immigrant population "seems likely to erode the common historical identity underpinning the transatlantic relationship."

5   Conclusion

NATO is a dynamic organization operating in a dynamic political environment. It is a capability-driven partnership between long-standing allies and recent joiners, as well as external partners. The goal of this TM has been to examine major geo-political changes of recent years with a view to identifying possible links between them and the development of allied operational support efforts. From there it has sought to draw preliminary conclusions as to what these changes mean for Canada's own efforts to project and sustain military power. Suffice to say that the transformation of the strategic environment from bipolarity to complexity has and will continue to foster the structural and doctrinal transformation of military forces—a point which will be developed further in part two of this project.

A degree of uncertainty—the direct result of the global financial crisis—means that the full impact of the political transformation of NATO on logistical capability development is not yet known. Clearly, there are challenges ahead both for those who wish to see the Alliance active on the broader international stage and for those who wish to restrain its ambitions. However, it is quite evident from the guidance provided to allied militaries that the importance of operational support to mission success is an accepted fact. One may therefore assume that the much-anticipated 2010 Strategic Concept will recognize it as a key enabler of NATO's strategic ambitions.

List of abbreviations/acronyms/initialisms

ACT	Allied Command Transformation
AU	African Union
CANOSCOM	Canadian Operational Support Command
CF	Canadian Forces
EU	European Union
MAP	Membership Action Plan
NAMSA	NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PfP	Partnership for Peace
SAC	Strategic Airlift Capability
SALIS	Strategic Airlift Interim Solution
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America

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This Technical Report examines the political dimension of NATO transformation and how it may affect how the Alliance and the Canadian Forces approach the challenge of deploying and sustaining forces in the field. It constitutes one part of a two-part project on the politico-military transformation of the Alliance and operational support. The first part of the report defines key terms and explores the strategic environment in which NATO finds itself. The second part evaluates the status of the transformational process through the lens of recent strategic guidance, enlargement, outreach to individual and institutional partners, and current economic realities. Preliminary conclusions reveal that strategic developments have awakened policy-makers to the importance of operational support to current and anticipated missions, and that innovations in capability development may be realized in the face fiscal austerity.

Le présent rapport technique examine la dimension politique de la transformation de l'OTAN ainsi que son incidence sur la façon dont l'Alliance et les Forces canadiennes procèdent au déploiement et au maintien en puissance des forces sur le terrain. Il fait partie d'un projet en deux volets portant sur la transformation politico-militaire du soutien à l'Alliance et du soutien opérationnel. La première partie du rapport définit les termes principaux et décrit l'environnement stratégique dans lequel se situe l'OTAN. La deuxième partie évalue l'état du processus de transformation à la lumière de la récente orientation stratégique, de l'expansion de l'OTAN, des contacts avec des partenaires (personnes et institutions) et des réalités économiques actuelles. Les conclusions préliminaires indiquent que des développements stratégiques ont sensibilisé les décideurs à l'importance du soutien opérationnel aux missions actuelles et à venir, et que des innovations en matière de développement des capacités pourraient être réalisées dans des conditions d'austérité budgétaire.

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NATO; Transformation; Operational Support; Canadian Forces

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